

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 06221

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BM, UR, CH
SUBJECT: SOVIET-BURMESE RELATIONS

REF: RANGOON 977

SUMMARY: A SOVIET MFA OFFICIAL WELCOMES THE NEGATIVE
BURMESE REACTION TO TENG HSIAO-PING'S BURMA VISIT AND
LISTS THE OBSTACLES LIMITING PROGRESS IN SOVIET-BURMESE
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RELATIONS. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT MOSCOW, WHILE NOT
OPTIMISTIC ABOUT INCREASING SOVIET PRESENCE OR INFLUENCE
IN BURMA, IS CONTENT WITH PRESENT RELATIVELY LOW SOVIET
DIPLOMATIC/AID PROFILE IN BURMA, ACCOMPANIED BY PERIODIC
PRAISE FOR NE WIN'S "BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM" AND ATTACKS
ON PRC SUPPORT FOR THE BCP IN THE SOVIET MEDIA. END
SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFF CALLED ON DEPUTY CHIEF MFA SOUTH ASIA DEPT.
B. Y. KIRNASOVSKIY MARCH 23. KIRNASOVSKIY'S STATEMENTS
ON SOUTH ASIA RELATED MATTERS HAVE BEEN REPORTED VIA
SEPTELS. THIS MESSAGE REPORTS HIS COMMENTS ON BURMA,
WHICH FALLS WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF MFA'S SOUTH ASIA DEPT.

2. KIRNASOVSKIY SAID THAT MOSCOW IS PLEASED WITH PRESENT
STATE OF SOVIET-BURMESE RELATIONS WHICH HE DESCRIBED
AS VERY GOOD. WHILE THERE IS THEREFORE NO "NEED" TO
IMPROVE THEM FURTHER, HE HELD, THERE ARE NEVERTHELESS
CERTAIN FACTORS THAT WOULD LIMIT FURTHER PROGRESS IN
SOVIET-BURMESE RELATIONS. HE LISTED THESE FACTORS AS:

-- BURMESE SENSITIVITIES ABOUT CLOSE RELATIONS WITH ANY
LARGE COUNTRY, BE IT THE USSR, THE U.S. OR CHINA.
BURMESE OFFICIALS OFTEN REMARK TO THE SOVIETS THAT "YOU
ARE NOT LIKE US" WHEN EXPLAINING RANGOON'S NEED TO AVOID
ESTABLISHING CLOSE RELATIONS WITH LARGE POWERS WHILE
TURNING INSTEAD TO SMALL OR MIDDLE LEVEL STATES;

-- THE BURMESE ECONOMY CANNOT ABSORB MORE ASSISTANCE.
THE SOVIET UNION THEREFORE SEES NO REASON TO EXPAND
ECONOMIC "COOPERATION," SINCE BURMESE
PERSONNEL AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES ARE ALREADY STRETCHED
TO THE LIMIT;
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-- THE VIEWS OF "BIG BROTHER" TO THE NORTH.

3. WITH EVIDENT RELISH, KIRNASOVSKIY DESCRIBED INDICA-
TIONS THAT THE BURMESE WERE NOT PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS
OF THE TENG HSAIO-PING VISIT TO BURMA, INCLUDING CRITI-
CISM IN NE WIN'S PARTY ORGAN ABOUT ONGOING CHINESE
ASSISTANCE TO ANTI-GOVERNMENT INSURGENTS. KIRNASOVSKIY
DENOUNCED PEKING'S DUAL PARTY-TO-PARTY/STATE-TO-STATE
APPROACH TO BURMA AND OTHER S.E.A. COUNTRIES, TERMING
IT "TWO-FACED." HE PREDICTED THAT PEKING WOULD FAIL
TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH BURMA AND COMPARED PRESENT-DAY
CHINESE INTERFERENCE IN BURMESE AFFAIRS WITH THE 19TH
CENTURY INCURSIONS AND EVENTUAL ABSORPTION OF BURMA BY
NEIGHBORING BRITISH INDIA.

4. COMMENT: SOVIETS ARE OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH THE
NEGATIVE BURMESE REACTION TO THE TENG HSAIO-PING VISIT
TO BURMA AND THE APPARENT DOWNTURN IN SINO-BURMESE RELA-
TIONS. HOWEVER, AS INDICATED REFTEL AND IN KIRNASOV-
SKIY'S PARA TWO REMARKS, THE SOVIETS ARE NOT OPTIMISTIC
ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR INCREASING SOVIET PRESENCE AND INFLU-

ENCE IN RANGOON. ALL EVIDENCE HERE SUGGESTS THAT MOSCOW
IS CONTENT WITH ITS PRESENT LOW DIPLOMATIC/AID PROFILE
IN BURMA, ACCOMPANIED BY PERIODIC PRAISE FOR NE WIN'S
"BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM" AND ATTACKS ON PRC SUPPORT
FOR THE BCP PUBLISHED IN SOVIET PROPAGANDA ORGANS.
TOON

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